20 YEARS!
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Christmas Special
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Shaggy
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Deluxe Items

Some people say a comics collector can be hard to shop for during the holidays; it's hard to keep up with just *what* he or she collects, and you have no ideas what he or she hasn't already bought. After all, comics collectors aren't always known for their patience and restraint...

For many collectors, the way to guarantee a great holiday surprise—and the kind of gift that the collector would rarely buy for himself or herself—is to shop for *deluxe comics items*. These are often the sort of item that the collector simply can't afford for himself--which means that they'll be very much appreciated as gifts.

Thanks to the efforts of a large number of publishers who want to make sure that some comics items get the quality treatment that they deserve, there are numerous slightly more expensive items that would appeal to the tastes of any collector. These items are very often a bit too expensive for collectors who spend most of their comics budget keeping up with their weekly titles; however, they're in the perfect price range for gifts.

One of the most publicized events of the past decade, the death of Captain America gets the deluxe treatment with the ***Captain America by Ed Brubaker Omnibus Volume One***. Reprinting everything from his intial story on the series up through the icon's death, this book is a solid collection for fans of Brubaker's controversial and highly popular run on the series.

Statues, statues, statues! Boy are there some great statues on the market. In fact, the past year has seen the release of a many collectible replicas from various publishers. Designed to capture the look and feel of the popular series, the ***Batman Black and White Statue Series*** is already several statues strong, with recent releases including designs based on the work of Alex Ross and Jim Lee. Randy Bowen is once again on top of the statue world, producing not only some dynamic full-size statues—such as the recent ***Thor***, ***Captain Marvel*** and ***Nick Fury*** statues—but also a long list of busts of many of your favorite Marvel characters, including the recently released two sets of ***Iron Man*** busts, showing the various armors of the Avenger just in time to prepare for his big-budget movie.

For the ultimate DC fan, the new line of ***1/4 Scale Museum Quality*** statues are unparalleled. With both the ***Batman 1/4 Scale Museum Quality Statue*** and the ***Superman 1/4 Scale Museum Quality Statue*** available, it provides the two biggest guns from DC a prominant place on your shelf.

Happy Holidays and welcome to the CSN Christmas Special 2007!

It is the time of the collector! With more high quality reprints and collectibles hitting the shelves than ever before, it can be hard to choose just the right choice for the collector in your life.

That's where the ***CSN Holiday Special*** comes in. In this publication, you will find a wide assortment of gift ideas perfect for holiday giving. At the end of the ***CSN Holiday Special*** is a "wish list." All the comics fan has to do is read through the catalog, mark his or her gift wishes, and pass the list along. What could be easier?

Best of all, this ***CSN Holiday Special*** makes it easy for gift-givers to do what they wanted to do all along: give a thoughtful gift that will truly please the recipient. This catalog is filled with hundreds of gift ideas ranging in price from a dollar to hundreds of dollars, and covering pretty much every price in between.

Of course, the ***CSN Holiday Special*** is nowhere nearly complete in its listings. The best way to get an idea about everything that's available is to talk to the folks at your local comics shop; they're knowledgeable people who will be able to help you find just the right gift idea.

Happy Holidays!

Brett Brooks, Cliff Biggers, & Ward Batty

If you want to get something a little less fragile, then you might turn your attention to action figures. Based on the hugely successful online game, the new line of ***World of Warcraft*** action figures features four dynamic figures representing different character types. To satisfy the BIG toy fan in you, look for the ***13" Deluxe Collector Figure*** series, including the recent additions of Nightwing and Green Arrow. Add in the ever-growing line of McFarlane toys, which includes the new larger-scale ***Twisted Fairy Tale*** figure of ***Dorothy of Oz***, and the selection is tremendous.

The fan looking for the pinnacle in comic packaging, DC presents the ***Absolute*** editions. These slipcased editions offer oversized artwork, excellent binding, and a plethora of extras added to every volume. Fans of Neil Gaiman will rejoice with the release of ***Absolute Sandman Volume Two***, the second of four editions that will collect the entirety of the series with recolored pages to take advantage of the new format; and if you missed ***Absolute Sandman Volume One***, don't panic, it's still available. But there are plenty of Absolute editions out there, including ***Absolute DC New Frontier***, ***Absolute Dark Knight***, and ***Absolute Batman: The Long Halloween*** among others. Each of these volumes is a great addition to any fans shelf, and an amazing way to enjoy these stories.

Long-time fans and fans of the classic age of comics will find themselves thrilled to see the line of ***DC Archives*** and ***Marvel Masterworks***. The early days of Spider-Man, Superman, Captain America, Green Lantern, and all of your favorites are reprinted in deluxe hardcover editions. More recently, Marvel has supplemented their ***Masterworks*** with a line of hefty ***Omnibus*** volumes reprinting 25 to 30 isues of such favorites as ***Fantastic Four, X-Men, Spider-Man,*** and ***Silver Surfer.***

Every reader has a favorite writer or artist—and what better item could you give than a limited edition volume autographed by that comic book creator? And of course, the folks at your local comic shop can help you find other autographed items perfectly suited for Christmas cheer.

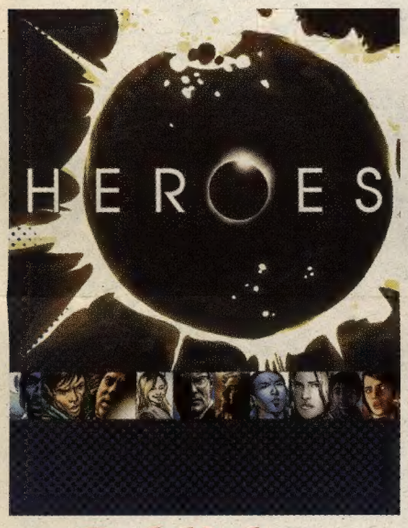
These are only a few of the high-quality deluxe items available in your local comic shop this holiday season. In addition to the books mentioned here, comic shops often have a selection of fine deluxe items that are no longer in print from publishers. *Always* take a few minutes to talk to the helpful people at your comics shop before you decide what gift to give; their expertise can be very helpful in selecting just the right item in a price range you'll be happy with. They can also point out items that would be perfect accompaniments for any deluxe gift item you might be interested in. If you're shopping for a comics fan, the friendly folks at your comics shop could be the best "Santa's helpers" you can find.

Courtesy your friendly neighborhood comics outlet!

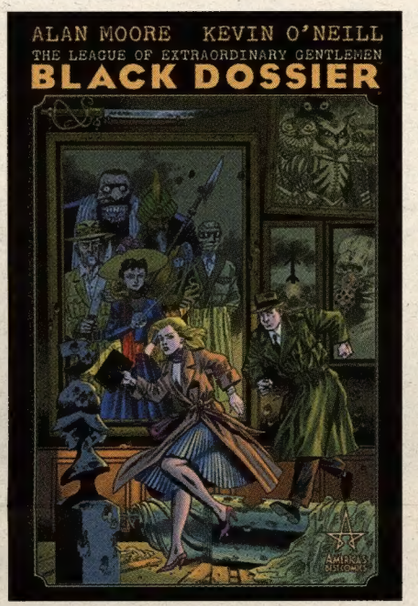
Collected Comics

Not that long ago, if a comics fan missed a particularly popular story in his favorite comic, he was out of luck unless he could find it in high-priced backstock. Nowadays, though, comics companies regularly offer some of their very best comics material in trade paperback or hardcover. These volumes are proven winners as a gift item; since they generally offer a complete story in one handy volume. Great new stories, quality reprints of some of comics' best—it's a win-win situation for gift-givers!

In the past few years, the number of trade paperbacks, hardcover reprints, and graphic novels has grown enormously, making scores of gift choices available that are sure to suit any comics fan's tastes. And best of all, virtually every one of these books is priced at $30 or less, allowing you to give lots of reading enjoyment without having to trim your gift list!



The superhero genre saw a big boost in the eye of the populace in the past year, thanks in no small part to the success of the television series ***Heroes***. Now, comics return the favor, with the ***Heroes*** hardcover, a colletion of both the online material and new comics that help to flesh out the storyline of the first season of the television series. Featuring artwork by a bevy of talent, including Tim Sale, the artist responsible for the artwork used on the show, the ***Heroes*** hardcover is a must-have item for fanatics of the show.



One of comics greatest talents is back with the long-awaited release of ***The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen: The Black Dossier***. This original graphic novel reunites writer Alan Moore with artist Kevin O'Neill to present a new tale of Mina Harker's search for the enigmatic Black Dossier.

Marvel Comics saw a big shake-up in the order of things with the release of the Civil War series, and now you can experience the whole thing in trade collections. ***Civil War*** collects the core series of the same name, but that is hardly all of the story. If you want to get the full experience you are going to want to pick up ***Civil War: Amazing Spider-Man, Civil War: Black Panther, Civil War: Captain America, Civil War: Fantastic Four, Civil War: Front Line Book One, Civil War: Front Line Book Two, Civil War: Iron Man*** and ***Civil War: Marvel Universe***. And before you think that you are done by picking up those trades, just wait a second. Fleshing out the story continues even further into ***Civil War: Peter Parker Spider-Man, Civil War: Road to Civil War, Civil War: Thunderbolts, Civil War: War Crimes, Civil War: Wolverine, Civil War: X-Men, Civil War: Young Avengers and Runaways, Civil War Companion*** and even ***Heroes for Hire Volume One: Civil War***. That's eighteen trade paperback collections if you weren't counting, and plenty of material for even the most die-hard Marvel fan out there.

Civil War also set the stage for Marvel's big moment of the decade so far, and the title of this one says it all. ***The Death of Captain America Volume One*** collects the story of Cap's death and the immediate reaction to the loss of one of Marvel's most beloved characters.

Marvel was loaded with big stories in the past year, though, and ***The Incredible Hulk: Planet Hulk*** is just one of them. Following the saga of the green giant as he is first an outcaste on a distant planet, and then his rise to become King of that world, this collection sets the stage for the current ***World War Hulk*** saga.

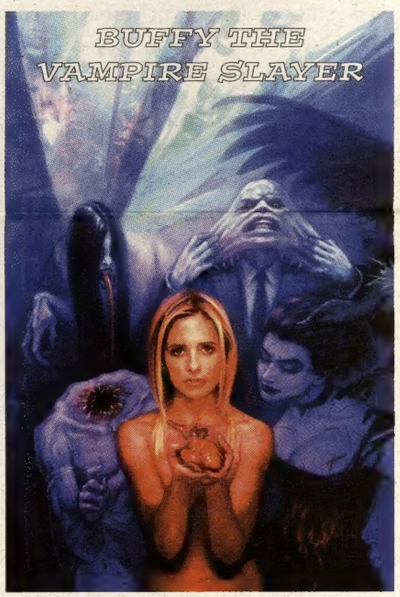
One of the most impactful comics of the past decade is finally collected into a single volume with the release of ***Infinite Crisis***,. a single series that reshaped the entire DC Universe. As a bonus, the hardcover edition has reworked script and artwork to clarify and enhance the experience.

Of course, there was a lot of build up to ***Infinite Crisis*** as well. The best place to start is probably with the ***Identity Crisis*** series, courtesy of author Brad Metzler and artists Rags Morales and Michael Bair. From there you can pick up the various series that led directly into ***Infinite Crisis***, including ***Day of Vengeance, Villains United, The Rann/Thanagar War, The Omac Project, Superman: Sacrifice***, and ***Teen Titans/Outsiders: The Death and Return of Donna Troy***.

And after the events of the most recent Crisis, there was a span of time in the DCU where they had to go without Superman, Batman and Wonder Woman. That period is detailed in the pages of the comic ***52***, a weekly comic that has since been collected into a series of trade paperback volumes. ***52 Volumes One*** through ***Four*** bring some new characters to the forefront and help to reset the DC universe.

And in the wake of the DCU reorganization came the relaunch of their two biggest team titles. Best selling author, and the writer of ***Identity Crisis***, Brad Metzler teamed with Ed Benes to relaunch the big guns in ***Justice League of America Volume One*** bringing the new team together against a classic foe. Then Geoff Johns and Dale Eaglesham bring the original super-team back together in ***Justice Society of America: The Next Age Volume One***. Two great teams, both with incredible creative teams and new beginnings, and it's a perfect time to check them out.

If you like things on a cosmic scale, then be sure to check out the collections of the ***Annihilation*** series. Pitting many of Marvel's cosmic characters against the threat of Annihilus and his invading hordes, ***Annihilation Book One, Annihilation Book Two*** and ***Annihilation Book Three*** reprint the series in its entirety.



Joss Whedon's most famous character has made a return to comics in a big way. ***Buffy The Vampire Slayer Volume One*** collects the first story arc of the new series written by Whedon himself, picking up where the orignal television series left off. This is Buffy season eight, and it is as good as the show, so don't miss out.

And if you are wanting more of that Whedon fix, then be sure to pick up the new ***Serenity*** hardcover edition, reprinting the comic series that bridged the gap between the ***Firefly*** television show and the Serenity feature film., as well as ***Joss Whedon's Fray***, featuring the exploits of a future slayer.

Bringing one of the most popular horror novel series to comics, ***Anita Blake: Vampire Hunter–Guilty Pleasures Volume One*** begins the adap-

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Cliff Biggers
Ward Batty

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Editorial Office
2770 Carillon Crossing
Marietta, GA 30066
fax (928) 441-5990
cliffbig@comicshopnews.com

Business Office
3577-A Chamblee-Tucker Rd. #215
Atlanta, GA 30341
(770) 939-1364
fax (678) 669-1525
wbatty@csnsider.com
www.csnsider.com

tation of the first novel under the watchful eye of the series author, Laurell K. Hamilton.

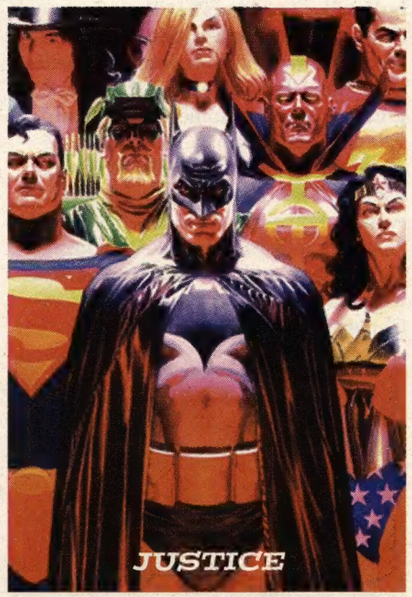
And based on the best-selling novel by Frank Beddor, ***The Looking Glass Wars: Hatter M*** is an original series that expands upon the setting and characters, providing material available nowhere else.

If you are wanting to see where the material for the hit movie originated, be sure to check out ***30 Days of Night***. Not only is the original series the movie was derived from available, but there are several other graphic novels following up the original tale available as well.

Zombies are everywhere! Which of course, is perfect for the holidays, since everyone knows that...um...zombies love presents. So, for the zombie on your list, you might want to pick up a copy of ***Marvel Zombies***. This amazingly popular book, which spotlights a world populated by undead versions of all the Marvel characters, is now collected into a convenient hardcover edition. And to follow that up, you can also pick up the second full series starring the dead heroes in ***Marvel Zombies vs. Army of Darkness***, revealing just how the sueprheroes might have fallen ill to the undead curse that has plagued them since.

For a less zombie-heroic book, you might want to check out ***The Walking Dead***. Creator Robert Kirkman has crafted a well thought out and engrossing tale about a world dealing with the rise of the zombie, which threatens to destroy the human race. Seven volumes of this series are now out in trade paperback.

One of the most acclaimed artists of this generation is the driving force behind the series, ***Justice***. Alex Ross has teamed once again with Jim Krueger and Doug Braithwaite to create a unique vision of Justice League of America—with a little bit of a nod to



the old ***Challenge of the Superfriends*** cartoon. The entire series is gathered into three hardcover editions.

A controversial look at the effect that superheroes would have upon a realistic world, ***The Boys*** by Garth Ennis and Darrick Robertson has achieved cult status among discerning readers; the first six issues now available in a trade edition.

Breinging back some of the most beloved comics of yesteryear, ***Harvey Comics Classics*** has two volumes with some very familar faces on the cover. ***Harvey Comics Classics Volume One: Casper the Friendly Ghost*** and ***Harvey Comics Classics Volume Two: Richie Rich*** both bring back figures missing from the shelves for too long.

The shining star on the Vertigo block belongs to Brian K Vaughn and his series, ***Y: The Last Man***. Unfortunately, the light of that star is about to go out, as the series comes to a close at the end of the year. The concept behind the book seems like something out of a bad teen-sex-farce—every male creature on the planet except for one human and one monkey die. The handling of the subject is anything but juvenile. Discover this gem before it is completely gone with the nine volumes reprinting the series.

Marvel has their own avant garde comics, and one of the better ones is now available in hardcover, in the form of ***Eternals*** by Neil Gaiman. The creator of Sandman brings his immense talents to the fore, as he gives a new take on Jack Kirby's godlike characters.

If you are curious as to the full story for many of your favorite characters, then there is no better way to see the whole story than DC's new Chronicles series of trades. ***Superman Chronicles*** and ***Batman Chronicles*** reprint, in the order the stories happened, the original tales of each character. This isn't like the other reprint editions that collect runs of a particular comic, but rather a series that looks at each story, and prints them in order from the various comics in which the characters appeared. Four volumes of ***Batman Chronicles*** are available, along with three collections of ***Superman Chronicles***. A fun and different way to read about true icons of the comics world.

The rise of the barbarian is invading stores everywhere! Conan has returned in full force, as Dark Horse brings us new comics, as well as reprints of the classic Conan tales, packaged as ***The Chronicles of Conan***. Each of the thirteen Conan volumes reprints tales from the old Marvel Comics stories, including work by Barry Windsor Smith and John Buscema.

With a new take on a classic character, ***The Lone Ranger*** by Brett Matthews and Sergio Cariello collects the first six issues of the critically acclaimed western series.

Once upon a time...well, actually it's right about now...DC put out a comic. ***Fables*** is a tremendous series that puts the idea of the fairy tale in an all-new perspective. Nine volumes have been release to date, but that isn't the full story. There is one more book in the ***Fables*** line, ***Fables: 1001 Nights of Snowfall***, an original hardcover graphic novel by regular series writer Bill Willingham and a bevy of artists who illustrate a series of interconnected stories.

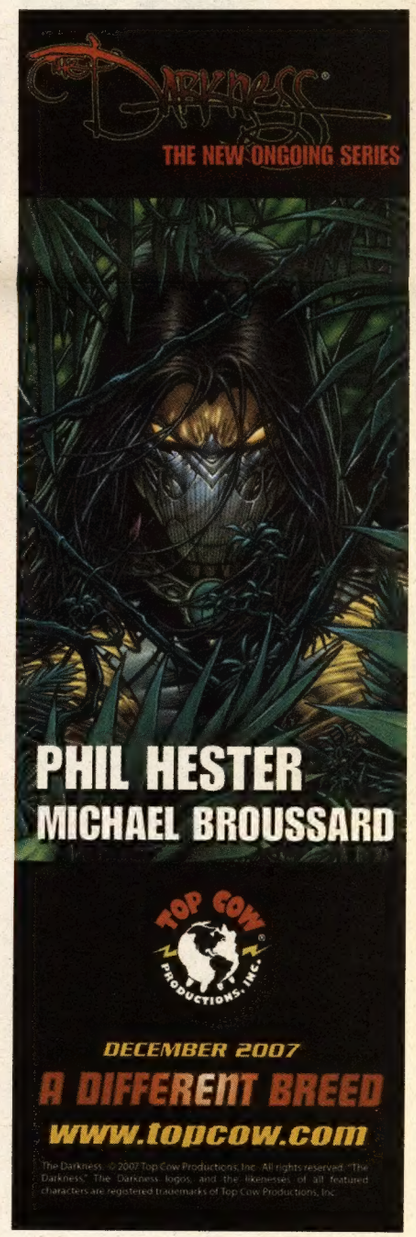
And if you want to get even more ***Fables*** material, be sure to check out Jack of Fables, the spin-off from the series. The first two volumes of the series are out, ***Jack of Fables Volume 1: The (Nearly) Great Escape*** and ***Jack of Fables Volume Two: Jack of Hearts***.

And following that fantasy vein, ***Mouse Guard Volume One: Fall 1152*** is the heroic fantasy series that follows guardsmice Saxon, Kenzie and Lieam as they search for a missing merchant.

Being a teenage superhero was never quite like this. ***Invincible*** is the critically acclaimed series from Image Comics and writer Robert Kirkman about the son of the world's greatest hero—or is he? There are nine volumes reprinting the early issues of the series, and three volumes of ***Invincible: The Ultimate Collection***, the larger hardcover collections.

Celebrating three decades of A Long Time Ago..., the ***Star Wars 30th Anniversary Hardcover*** editions reprint some of the best comics from the past. Nine volumes have already come out, including ***Boba Fett, Darth Maul*** and ***Splinter of the Mind's Eye***.

Looking for the ultimate in comics? Marvel's Ultimate line of comics provides a great jumping-on point for new readers, as well as a new take on classic characters for long-time fans. ***Ultimate Spider-Man*** is the flagship of the line, with eight hardcover volumes in print. Stars of their own duo of animated films, ***The Ultimates*** are also featured in a pair of hardcovers collecting their two series. ***Ultimate X-Men*** has a series of


THE DARKNESS
THE NEW ONGOING SERIES
PHIL HESTER
MICHAEL BROUSSARD
TOP COW PRODUCTIONS, INC.
DECEMBER 2007
A DIFFERENT BREED
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seven hardcovers of their own, collecting the majority of the series. Written by science-fiction author Orson Scott Card is joined by fan-favorite Andy Kubert to create an Iron Man unlike any that you have seen in ***Ultimate Iron Man***. And ***Ultimate Fantastic Four*** is the latest ongoing series, that starts with a bang and keeps the pace going for four hardcover volumes. And if you want to take your Ultimate experience one step further, then be sure to check out ***Ultimate Galactus Volume One: Nightmare***, ***Ultimate Galactus Volume Two: Secret***, and ***Ultimate Galactus Volume Three: Extinction***, introducing several new Ultimate characters, including the ultimate villain of the Ultimate universe.

If you like stories that are about people, then you aren't going to do much better than ***Strangers in Paradise***. The series is now complete, and collected into nineteen paperback volumes. But if you want to try to get it in a more concise method, then look for the ***Pocket Strangers in Paradise Collection***, with only six volumes available it's much easier to collect.

Toys have never really been as fun as they are in the pages of ***Twisted Toyfare Theatre***. Taken from the pages of ***Wizard Magazine***, these eight volumes of hilarious sketches star some of the best—and lamest, accordingly—toys that have ever come down the pike.

Buffy The Vampire Slayer creator Joss Whedon has had a heck of a run as the writer of ***Astonishing X-Men***, and it's not too late to get in on the excitement. The first three story arcs of the series are collected in ***Astonishing X-Men Volume One: Gifted***, ***Astonishing X-Men Volume Two: Dangerous*** and ***Astonishing X-Men Volume Three: Torn*** trade paperbacks. If you want to get it all in one book, then look for ***Astonishing X-Men Volume One***, which reprints both storylines. This is the the X-Men the way they were meant to be, with dynamic art and story melding together to make the best mutant title in years.

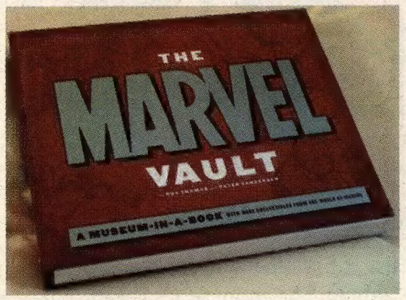
And if you are a fan of everyone's favorite mutant—and that would be Wolverine in case you were curious—then there are some great books for you to check out. The origin of the Logan has long remained a mystery, but there has been a lot of light shed in recent times. ***Wolverine: Origin*** by Paul Jenkins and Andy Kubert unveils the moment when the man who would be called Wolverine learns that he is a mutant, and sets the stage for more to come. ***Wolverine: Origins and Endings*** bridges the gap, showing how Wolverine comes to terms with regaining his memory of his past, while ***Wolverine: Origins***, ***Wolverine: Savior, and Wolverine: Swift*** and ***Terrible*** reprints the first story arcs from the ongoing series. A great way to discover more about Wolverine than has ever been revealed before.

There is more to Marvel than just a few mutants though, and you can also find some ***Essential*** volumes that collect the early stories of some classic heroes. Some of the newest additions include the first volume of ***Essential Defenders Volume Three***, and new volumes of ***Essential Silver Surfer*** and ***Essential Fantastic Four***. Some classic books from the 1970's take center stage with the release of ***Essential Moon Knight Volume One*** and ***Essential Savage She-Hulk Volume One***. These are but a small sampling of the great collections that Marvel have put together for fans just looking for great reading material.

Not to be outdone, DC has issued their line of ***Showcase Presents*** softcover volumes. Like the Essential collections, these books reprint classic material in easy-to-afford black-and-white volumes. Already available are ***Showcase Presents*** collections starring Superman, Batman, Green Lantern, and The Justice League, but there are also lesser known

books like The War That Time Forgot, The House of Mystery, Martian Manhunter and Adam Strange. Terrific collections that give long-time fans a great way to read some very rare and valuable material.

All these holiday choices! And this list is still far from complete! If you want to know more about what's available, talk to Santa's helpers at your local comics shop and see what they can do to make this the most memorable Christmas ever!



Books About Comics

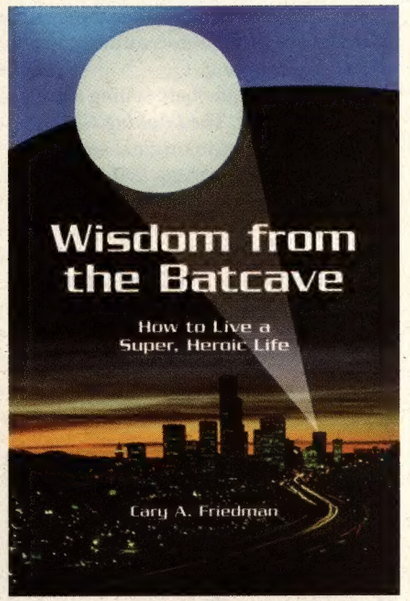
Comics fans are often interested in their hobby to such a degree that they want to read *about* comics as much as they want to read the comics themselves. There are a number of books that focus on comics as a hobby, or on the lives of noteworthy comics creators.

Recreating over 60 years of memorable moments, ***The Marvel Vault: Museum-In-A-Book*** is an amazing collection of material for the Marvel fan everywhere. With special removable pages the include recreations of orginal sketches done by some of the most important artists in comic's history, this is a must-have item.

If you are a little younger, and are wanting the history of a company not quite so old, then ***Image Comics: The Road to Independence*** might be for you. Showing the events that led up to the creation of the newest big publisher in the field, detailed by interviews with most of the creators that founded the company.

Frank Frazetta, one of the most acclaimed illustrators of modern times. ***Icon: A Retrospective by Frank Frazetta***, offers a look at the amazing work of one of the acknowledged masters of the fantasy art genre. And new for the holiday season is ***Frank Frazetta: Rough Works***. This collection shows the roughs and sketchs that Frazetta used before doing the final paintings of his famous artwork, showing how skilled and polished even his "rough" work appears. For fans of the artists or the art, these are can't miss picks.

Cary A. Friedman finds inspiration in the Dark Knight's adventures, and he shares that insiration in ***Wisdom from the Batcave***. This cleverly insightful

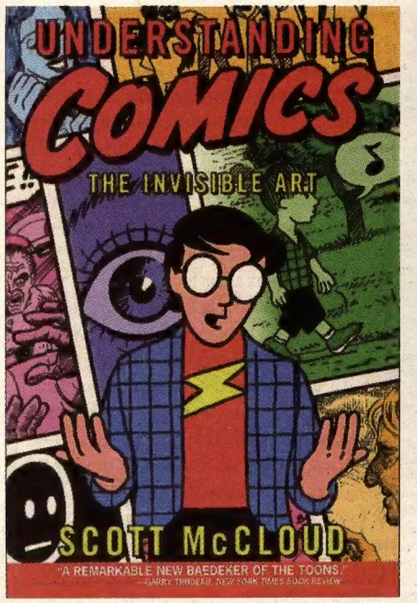


volume uses Batman's experiences as an ethical and philosophical guidepost.

Author *David Michaelis* offers an insightful, sometimes somber, and occasionally controversial look at the life of *Charles Schulz* in the fascinating ***Schulz & Peanuts: A Biography***, one of the holiday season's must-reads for fans of the classic comic strip (and who isn't?).

The ladies of comics sometimes get overlooked as nothing more than windowdressing, but ***DC Comics Covergirls*** by Louise Simonson provides an overview of the role that the female character has played in the history of the medium. To accompany the text, the book collects some of the best covers featuriing the females of the DCU—so there is a little eye-candy after all.

And while not being a direct part of the comics industry, the illustrious Bettie Page has had a huge impact on the field from the way that artists have portrayed women. ***Bettie Page Rules!*** by Jim Silke is a collection of photos and illustrations of Ms. Page and her peers from the by-gone era of the pin-up queen.



A must-have for any reader who enjoys comics is Scott McCloud's brilliant ***Understanding Comics.*** Told entirely in comics form, the book explains the language, structure, and history of the comic book medium; it's equally entertaining for new fans and for readers who have enjoyed the field for decades. The follow-up work is ***Reinventing Comics***, which serves as a great companion piece to the series. The latest part of this trilogy is ***Making Comics***, a step-by-step guide to creating comics in a variety of methods, with McCloud drawing upon his experience to give you the guidance to create a comic from start to finish.

Some folks might call these the ultimate reference guides. Dorling Kindersley has produced some great new books, detailing some of the most popular characters in comics. ***The Ultimate Guide to Spider-Man*** by Tom DeFalco, ***The Ultimate Guide to Batman*** by Scott Beatty, ***The Ultimate Guide to The X-Men*** by Peter Sanderson, the ***The Ultimate Guide to Superman*** and ***The Ultimate Guide to Wonder Woman*** are hardcover volumes that provide insight and background for fans, both new and old.

Fans are always interested in the value of their comics--and no publication gives them more comprehensive information about more books than the ***Overstreet Price Guide 37th Edition***. This book also makes a remarkable useful checklist-index, even for the fan who has no plans to buy or sell back issues!

If you are looking for a comprehensive guide to creating a comic, then look no further than the ***Wizard's Guide*** series. Taken from the pages of Wizard Magazine Basic Training section, ***Wizard Basic Training: How To Draw–Getting Started*** is the perfect starting point, providing new material as well as reprint. Many of the industries top talents step in to give you advice, including Mike Wieringo, Norm Breyfogle, Terry Dodson, Jim Calafiore, Tom Raney, Greg Horn, Phil Jimenez, Brian Bendis, George Perez, Walt Simonson, Phil Hester, Brian Hitch and many more.

There are even more books that will help you put the finishing touches on your artistic endeavors. ***Comic Book Inking*** and ***Comic Book Inking Volume Two*** from Dark Horse examine one of the most mis-understood aspects of comic art; inking is more than just acting as a human xerox machine, and these are the books that will teach you the wrongs and rights, and the different styles that populate the comics community.

Of course, the trend right now is in the colors. And the new ***DC Comics Guide to Coloring and Lettering Comics*** is a great way to teach you the different techniques used by professionals in the industry. Filled with examples and exercises, this is a great way to understand and appreciate—and even emulate—your favorite coloring styles.

And if this isn't enough of a selection of holiday goodies about the comics field, you can find still more at your local comic shop. Talk to the friendly people there and let them know what sort of thing you're looking for; they'll take over from there and point out a variety of great gift ideas on their shelves.

Manga

The fastest growing section of the comic store is the manga section. With not only the popularity of the books, but also the games, toys, and television shows based on the comic, manga has become one of the biggest and brightest zones in any store. And it is sure to be filled with some wonderful surprises and treats for the manga fan.

Stepping out from the smaller, pocket sized editions, TokyoPop has introduced several oversized complete collections of material. ***Battle Royale Ultimate Edition*** and ***Warcraft: The Sunwell Trilogy Ultimate Edition*** collect multiple volumes of each series in a deluxe oversized format. A great way to get the material for real fans, as both collections contain previously unpublished material.

Not to be outdone, the ***Azumanga Daioh Omnibus*** from ADV is almost 700-pages of teenage life and humor by creator Kiyohiko Azuma.

The original television series has come to a close, but the popularity of the books remains strong. ***Yu-Gi-Oh*** has several volumes available, with Yoshihiro Togashi's character and setting taking a much darker tone while still staying accessible for all ages. And then, to continue the story, ***Yu-Gi-Oh GX*** continues the saga with an all-new cast of characters in the same world, but following new adventures.

Ninjas, ninjas everywhere, and they all go to school. Trying to take its place as the next sensation after YuGiOh, ***Naruto*** is tearing up the television ratings as well as the comic shelves. With twenty-four volumes released to date, Masashi Kishimoto's title character has become something of an icon among manga fans. For the fan who wants only the best, there's the ***Naruto Shadow Box Set,*** featuring all 27 volumes in one custom-designed box, along with a variety of bonus items. With the recently released second volume, ***Return to Labyrinth*** continues the story established over two decades ago by Jim Henson. And the only place that you get get this story is from the manga series by Chris Lie and Jake T. Forbes.

Not only can Ichigo Kurosaki see dead people, but he can do something about it. ***Bleach*** is Tite Kubo's manga about a young man who is given the ability to destroy rogue ghosts gone bad, even though he's only fifteen years old. Pick up the first of the fourteen volumes that have been released so far, and you'll be hooked, just like so many others.

Don't think this is everything! There are *tons* of titles from a wealth of publishers out there. The only way to know if the book you are looking for is available is to ask one of the friendly and informed people at your local comic shop!

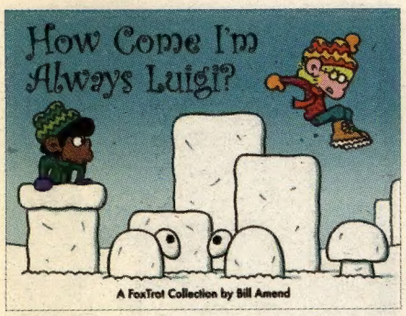
Comic Strip Reprints

Comics fans often overlook the original comics art form: the comic strip. Comic *strips* predate the comic *book* by decades. Many of the best strips of both today and yesterday can be found in handy trade paperbacks and hardcover anthologies that can open up an all-new world of comics reading.

The grand-daddy of all modern comic strips is Charles Schulz brilliant ***Peanuts*** strip. Never before has the entire fifty-year run of the series been printed in its entirety. Never, before now. Fantagraphics presents ***The Complete Peanuts***, a totally comprehensive reprint of the series, covering every strip to appear in the paper for the first time ever. And on top of that, each issue features special interviews and information about Schulz and his creation. The first eight volumes are now available.

The comic strip is over, but the collections are still just as strong and controversial. Boondocks is the socially charged, driven comic strip that holds no punches, draws no lines, and takes no prisoners, and in doing so has grown a legion of fans. ***All the Rage: The Boondocks Past and Present*** is the latest book, collecting the final strips from the series.

Another strip that discontinued the daily strip—though there are still new Sunday strips every week—is the wonderful ***Fox Trot***. Rife with the pop culture references, and featuring the geeky



wisdom of Jason, this series is too close to the life of a comics fan. The final collection of hte daily strips is out, entitled ***And When She Opened the Closet, All of the Clothes Were Polyester!***

The recent death of Johnny Hart was a great loss for the comic strip world, but you can still experience his greatest work. ***GrowinGold with BC: A 50 Year Celebration*** was one of the last pieces that Hart worked on before he left us, and collects some of the best strips of the multiple-award-winning strip, along with personal anecdotes and photos from the half-century.

Following in the footsteps of The Complete Peanuts you can find ***The Complete Dennis The Menace***. Hank Ketchum's child of destruction was really more of a smile towards children everywhere when it began. This series of hardcovers gives you the opportunity to go back and check out the strip as it developed, reprinted in complete chronological order.

Not all comic strips appear in newspapers anymore. In fact, there is a whole genre of comic strip that is located online, but that doesn't mean that you can't find collections at your local comic shop. ***PVP*** is one of the big online comics, and there are multiple collections of the strip that are available from Image. ***Penny Arcade*** is another popular book that Image has picked up and you can find them sitting just down the shelf. ***MegaTokyo*** is big with the manga crowd, and to that end they have put out their collections in manga style format. And for the gaming crowd—or really just those that love wry, sarcastic humor—***The Oder of the Stick*** not only has two collections of the online strip, but two unique books with all-original material now available.

Zits, which has steadily grown in popularity since it first appeared in 1997, deals with parents trying to figure out their 15-year-old aspiring rock star son, and the son trying to figure out his traditional parents. There are eleven collections—or sketchbooks as creators Jerry Scott and Jim Borgman call them—currently available, the latest being ***Alternative Zits: A Zits Treasury.***

One of the funniest strips in the papers today, ***Get Fuzzy***, now has four reprint volumes and one treasury edition on the stands. The newest collection of Satchel the dog and Bucky the cat is entitled ***I'm Ready for My Movie Contract***.

There are many other strip reprints available, including volumes of ***Over the Hedge, Rhymes With Orange, For Better or Worse,*** and more. Ask the staff of your local comic shop for suggestions for comic strip reprint books that would make excellent--and unexpected--gifts for the holidays. Who knows? Before too long, you might find those comics fans eagerly scanning through the daily newspaper (if they don't already)...

Gift Ideas

As the holidays get ever closer, leaving you scrambling for ideas for gifts for a comics collector, you might want to consider numerous smaller items that any collector can use. Most of these gift ideas are inexpensive, readily available, and very popular with collectors.

You might think that every comic is only available on paper, but that isn't the case any more. The new CD-Rom and DVD Rom collections of comic books are available that reprint amazing amounts of material. Amazing collections of ***40 Years of Captain America, 40 Years of Ghost Rider, 40 Years of The Incredible Hulk, 44 Years of The Fantastic Four,*** and ***Fantastic Four/ Silver Surfer Complete Collection*** are available on DVD Rom, along with an amazing collection of ***Absolutely Mad: 53 Years of Mad Magazine. Ultimate X-Men*** also has been given the CD-Rom treatment, allowing for a great package

for fans not afraid to read a book on computer.

Comics bags are great gifts. A hundred bags aren't very expensive, are often useful, and are frequently overlooked when collectors are buying for themselves. If you know a collector who has a large collection he's never gotten around to bagging--a common problem with collectors who have thousands of books--then a thousand bags would be even better!

If you want to give the collector a real "gift assortment," then put together a package of a hundred modern bags (to fit recent comic books), a hundred silver age bags (to fit older comics and slightly-larger independent books), and a hundred magazine bags (for magazines and graphic novels). Even if the collector is well-stocked on bags now, he'll be able to use them later. Furthermore, many collectors never remember to buy the odd-sized bags they need for some items in their collections. This assortment will cover books of all sizes.

If you want to help a comics fan upgrade to the Cadillac of comics bags, you can buy him or her some of the more expensive *mylar bags*. These deluxe bags offer the ultimate in comics protection--and they're the sort of gift that many fans don't normally pick up for themselves.

Backing boards are another sort of "splurge items" that most collectors rarely buy for themselves. These are acid-free specially-treated boards that fit in the bag behind the comic book, adding strength to the bagged comic and protecting it from bending and other damage. Again, most comic shops carry these buy the hundreds or the thousands; they're not only useful and functional gifts, but they can make a collection look much, much better as well!

What about *boxes?* If you're looking for last-minute gifts and you're tired of seeing comics scattered all over the house, then you should really consider a gift of comics boxes. For those fans who have plenty of room, full-sized boxes are perfect; these boxes are about 27" long, and they hold about 350 comics. For collectors who are trying to keep their collections in bedroom closets, half-sized boxes might be a better idea; these boxes are about 15" long and hold just a little more than half as many comics as a full-sized box holds. Since they're not as deep, though, they fit in a closet easily. Upscale storage items such as Collection Drawers, a drawer/box combination unit, are also available.

And like the high-end bags, there are now high-end boxes. Whether you choose to pick up some of the high-quality plastic boxes, made to endure for the long haul, or if you choose to go to the wonderful drawer boxes, where the storage part of the box is designed like a drawer so the comics stored can be viewed at any time by pulling out the drawer and getting to the good stuff, there are great options available.

Plastic dividers are a luxury item that can help organize a collection; these sturdy dividers are like the ones many comic shops use, and they offer a tab that stands taller than books and has room to mark titles, etc. This will help keep the collection neatly separated and make it more accessible to the collector who likes to keep everything organized. These are available individually or in hundred lots.

The best idea yet might be to combine all four into a gift package, complete with 300 bags, 300 backing boards, a dozen divider cards, and a full-sized box; or 200 bags, 200 backing boards, a half-dozen dividers, and a shorter box. This will give the collector enough bags and backing boards to fill up the box with his newly-bagged collection, along with divider cards to keep the books neat and orderly.

DVDs make great gifts. A variety of companies are issuing fine videotapes of Japanese animation; some are subtitled and some are dubbed, but either format features the high-quality animation that fans crave. Plus, there have been many great superhero based live action and animated films and television series from the past few years, including the recently released ***Superman: Doomsday***, ***Spider-Man 3*** and ***300*** films. Comic shops also offer an assortment of videotapes featuring classic television, American animation, sf films, cult classics, and more.

Comic shops also carry comics-related calendars, stuffed toys, adventure books, illustrated novels, and the like, all of which are suitable for gift giving. Check with your local comic shop and see what they have for last-minute gift giving. There's no better "Santa's helper" than your local comics shop staff; they know what's new, what's available, and they can work within a price range that you set. With their help, you can be sure to find items to make this holiday season memorable for a comics fan.

CSN Christmas Checklist

The *CSN Christmas Checklist* is an alphabetical listing of all the gift items mentioned in the *CSN Christmas Special*. In the case of multi-volume sets, a space is provided to list the preferred volume. Feel free to use this as your personal Christmas Wish List and even make extra copies for friends and relatives. All the items are currently in print, so if you don't see what you want, be sure to ask ask the folks at your shop about ordering it for you. Many of these items are available *exclusively* at a Comic Specialty outlets.

- ❒ *30 Days of Night*
- ❒ *52 (4 vol)* _____
- ❒ *100 Bullets: (11 vol)* _____
- ❒ *300*
- ❒ *1602*
- ❒ *Absolute Batman Hush*
- ❒ *Absolute Crisis on Infinite Earths*
- ❒ *Absolute Dark Knight*
- ❒ *Absolute DC New Frontier*
- ❒ *Absolute Kingdom Come*
- ❒ *Absolute League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*
- ❒ *Absolute Sandman (2 vol)* _____
- ❒ *Absolute Watchmen*
- ❒ *Action Heroes Archive Editions*
- ❒ *Adam Strange Archives*
- ❒ *Adventures of Barry Ween Vol 1 & 2*
- ❒ *Adventures of Little Archie*
- ❒ *All-Star Archives (10 vol)* _____
- ❒ *Amazing Spider-Man Omnibus*
- ❒ *American Virgin (2 vol)* _____
- ❒ *Anime Video* _____
- ❒ *Archie Americana: Best of the 1940's*
- ❒ *Archie Americana: Best of the 1940's Vol. 2*
- ❒ *Archie Americana: Best of the 1950's*
- ❒ *Archie Americana: Best of the 1960's*
- ❒ *Archie Americana: Best of the 1970's*
- ❒ *Archie Americana: Best of the 1980's*
- ❒ *Army @ Love Vol 1: The Hot Zone Club*
- ❒ *Art of Comic Book Inking*
- ❒ *Astonishing X-Men Vol 1: Gifted*
- ❒ *Astonishing X-Men Vol 2: Danger*
- ❒ *Astonishing X-Men Vol 3: Torn*
- ❒ *Astonishing X-Men HC*
- ❒ *Astro City: Life in the Big City*
- ❒ *Astro City: Confessions*
- ❒ *Astro City: Family Album*
- ❒ *Astro City: Tarnished Angel*
- ❒ *The Atom Archives (2 vols)* _____
- ❒ *Azumanga Daioh Omnibus*
- ❒ *Baltimore, or The Steadfast Tin Soldier and The Vampire*
- ❒ *Batman Archives (7 vol)* _____
- ❒ *Batman and the Monster Men*
- ❒ *Batman Chronicles (4 vol)* _____
- ❒ *Batman: A Death in the Family*
- ❒ *Batman: A Lonely Place of Dying*
- ❒ *Batman: Arkham Asylum*
- ❒ *Batman: Black and White (2 vol)* _____
- ❒ *Batman: Child of Dreams*
- ❒ *Batman: Dark Knight Archives (4 vols)*
- ❒ *Batman: Dark Victory*
- ❒ *Batman: The Dynamic Duo Archives (2 Vol)*
- ❒ *Batman: Face The Face*
- ❒ *Batman Hush Vol 1*
- ❒ *Batman Hush Vol 2*
- ❒ *Batman Illustrated by Neal Adams*
- ❒ *Batman in the 40's*
- ❒ *Batman in the 50's*
- ❒ *Batman in the 60's*
- ❒ *Batman in the 70's*
- ❒ *Batman in the 80's*
- ❒ *Batman in World's Finest Archives Vol. 1*
- ❒ *Batman: War on Crime*
- ❒ *Batman: Year One*
- ❒ *Batman Cover to Cover*
- ❒ *Battle Royale Ultimate Edition*
- ❒ *Bettie Page Rules!*
- ❒ *Blackhawk Archives Vol. 1*
- ❒ *Blankets*
- ❒ *Bleach (14 Vol)* _____
- ❒ *Blue Line Illustration Board*
- ❒ *Bomb Queen (2 vol)* _____
- ❒ *Boneyard (5 Vol)* _____
- ❒ *Boneyard Color (2 Vol)* _____
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- ❒ *BPRD (6 vol)* _____
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- ❒ *Buffy The Vampire Slayer Volume One*
- ❒ *Buffy The Vampire Slayer Omnibus (2 vol)*
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- ❒ *Civil War: Fantastic Four*
- ❒ *Civil War: Front Line (2 vol)* _____
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- ❒ *Collected Bone (7 vol)* _____
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- ❒ *Comic Bags*
- ❒ *Comic Book Encyclopedia*
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- ❒ *Daredevil Yellow*
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- ❒ *DC Comics Encyclopedia*
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- ❒ *DC Deluxe 13" Figure* _____
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- ❒ *DC Guide To Inking*
- ❒ *DC Guide To Penciling*
- ❒ *DC Guide To Writing*
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- ❒ *Death: The High Cost of Living*
- ❒ *Death: The Time of Your Life*
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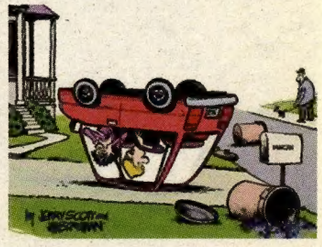

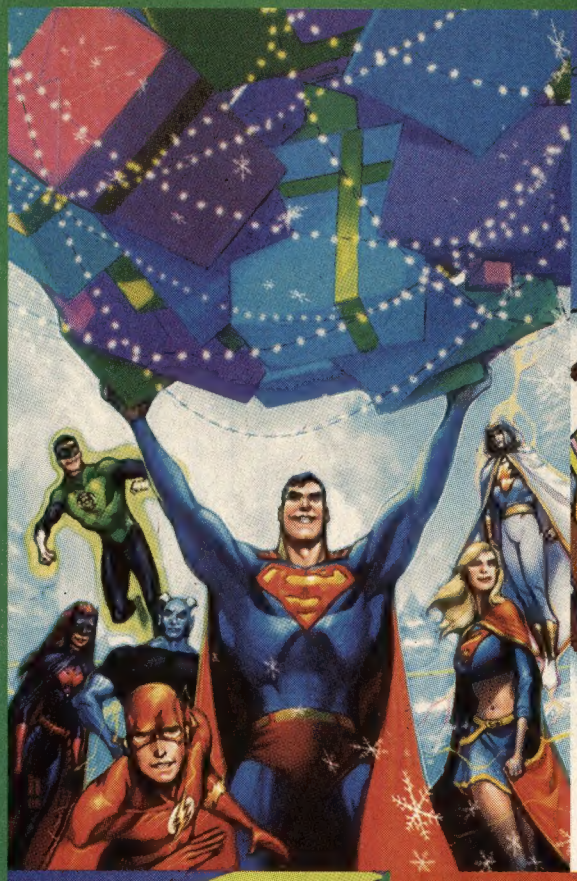

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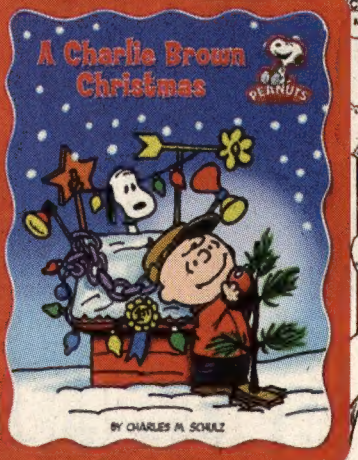
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